## NOTHING TO KEEP DARK

The Letter of Senator Ingalls to the District Commissioners Explained.

He Requested That One Communication Should be Considered Confidential.

Because of This the Commissioners Have Kept Their Minute Book Shut All Winter.

The "Star" Replies to the Commission-"as' Letter in Vigorous Style,

"I was very much surprised," said Senator Ingalls last evening to a REPUBLICAN re-porter who called upon him, "to see my name mentioned in a conspicious manner in THE REPUBLICAN, as a man who wanted to keep some things dark. Once when I wrote to the commissioners for some information concerning a pending matter in which the public had no interest, except in the ultimate, tho information appeared in full in the newspapers before the committee received it. I then wrote a note to the commissioners requesting that such information when asked for by the committee be withheld from the press until acted upon, or at least until the committee upon, or at least until the committee received it. If I chose to give it to the press that was another matter. The information was intended for my use in making up my decision upon a certain thing. I asked that it should not be made public until acted upon, as I had the right to do. I am surprised that such a request could have been construed into an intimation that I wanted anything that about the commissioners' office or any of their books or records kept from the public. I have nothing to do with the business of the commissioners, don't know anything about their missioners, don't know snything about their books, and certainly have no desire if I had the power to keep anything dark there. As a matter of fact, I have no authority over them, and they are not at all obliged to consider my request as binding up them."

"Don't you think," asked the reporter, "that the newspaper reporters would have respected your wishes in such matters just as readily as the commission."

"Certainly. I do. My experience with newspaper men convinces me that they can be trusted. I have frequently given them

be trusted. I have frequently given them information which I requested should not be published until it had been seted upon, or until certain things had been done, and I have never yet known one of them to betray my confidence."
"The question has been and will be asked,

The question has been and will be asked, Senator, what communication upon public matters there can be between you and the commissioners which the public haven't the right to know all about. I wish you would I do not now remember what that particular case was, but it was information of a confidential naturo the publication of which would defeat all action upon the matter. My recollection is that it did defeat it."

recollection is that it did defeat it."
"But haven't the public the right to know it whether it defeats legislation or not?"
"I don't think so. The public has the undoubted right to know the results, the decisions reached, and it does. But this in-formation is of a private character. It isn't a question of right at all, but a question whether legislation shall be defeated by some petty antagonisms which will overshadow the main question."

"Will you give an illustration?"
"Take this question of the location of rail-"Take this question of the location of railroad tracks and depots in the city. The
people on Capitol hill want the Baltimore and
Ohio depot removed, the ands graded off, and
the streets continued through as they were
intended to be. The people in the southwestern part of the city want less railroads tracks
on their streets and avanues. The people
about Sixth street want the tracks taken from
that street. There is a proposition pending
to make a union depot on Maryland avenue,
and to so locate the tracks as to suit and to so locate the tracks as to suit the great body of the people. Now, suppose, just for an illustration, that in getting our information in order to arrive at an intelligent decision, some of it was of such a nature as to arouse autagonisms and excite enmitles among a few people with differing views upon the subjet There is likely to grow up a fight which will distract all atten-tion from the main object, defeat all legislaiion from the main object, defeat all legisla-tion upon the matter, and leave things just

'Isn't this your position, then, that it is ser to get done that which the great wiser to get done that which the great mass of people want done than, by making everything public, to bring on a conflict be-tween two little people who are only inter-ested in their little houses and barns, and so defeat the wishes of everybody class?"

Yes, that will do as an illustration." "Isu't it expediency then, rather than absolute right, which you urge as a reason for non-publicity in certain really trifling

"Yes, it is. The public have an absolute right to know of everything that is going on in public business, but in such cases it would not be wise, it would not be practical states-manship, by making public things in which the great people, except some few persons, have not the slightestginterest, to force de-feat upon a measure in which all are inter-

"How often does it happen that there are communications of a nature which it would not be expedient to publish?"

"Very rarely."
"Do you remember when your note to the commissioners concerning the information which you wished to have considered confidential was written?"

"Not exactly, but it was early in the winter."

'Have you received from them or sent to them communications of a like nature since that time?" I do not remember that a single communi-

cation has passed between the commissioners and myself since that time which might not, with perfect propriety, have been given to the press. But I have nothing to say regarding the action of the commissioners, for I don't know anything about it. I certainly never requested that any other matter than communications to me personally of such a nature as I have indicated should be kept from the public. I had no desire to do so, nor any right, for I have nothing whatever to do with the business of their office, their records, or their books. It isn't exactly right to parade me as a man who wants to keep things dark, when you know and every other news-paper man who comes to me or to any committee room for information knows that I am always willing to give the fullest information

The senator was assured that it was only on the authority of the district commission-ers that he had been represented as in favor of secrecy. Any other intimation would be met with a prompt denial from many reporters who were indebted to him for information.

## PRESS COMMENTS.

Silurday's 2(ar.

From the letter of the district commissioners to the Star it seems that the current idea that there is any difficulty in getting access to the proceedings at the district offices is altogether a misapprehension. With the trifling exceptions that the press and the public are refused admittance to all the regular meetings of the board, because the commissioners choose to regard their business sessions in the light of secret cabinet consultations; are shut out from the special meetings of tions; are shut out from the special meet-ings with delegations of citizens because the visitors request socrecy, and are denied access to the records—letter-books denied access to the records—letter-books containing all the official correspondence, because the chairman of the senate district committee objects to publicity of communications between the commissioners and his committee—with these slight exceptions everything about the district offices is open and accessible to an unlimited extent. But the reporters do not seem to appreciate the facilities afforded them for getting information at the district offices. Some time ago when they found the district doors shammed somewhat unceremonicusly in their faces, the following minute made by one of them at the time shows the ground upon which the the time shows the ground upon which the tancous restrictions were then based:
"Dr. Thadall said that Commissioner Edmonds | trilling.

had told him that it was desirable that there should be some different method of giving out district news; that he [Dr. Tindail] might make up the news at different hours in the day, and the reporters could call at these definite hours and get what might be prepared for them. He [Mr. Edmonds] did not like the books and papers of the office handled over by the reporters of the local press, nor did he like to have them about the office so much, as it interfered with the clerks' dulies."

The reporters also found themselves con-

The reporters also found themselves confronted in their search for information by the following:

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMNS, DEC. 22, 1882—Ordered, That all officers and employee of the district government are prohibited from furnishing any information relating to the affairs of the district unless the same be communicated through the commissioners of a provided for by existing laws and regulations; Provider, That this order shall not prohibit news being given to the pross on matters of public interest and concern when duly authorized by the commissioners.

commissioners.

On approaching the quarters for the promulgation of the "duly authorized" public information they again struck a "Ne Thoroughfare barrier in the printed placard, "The Commissioners are in Private Session," that usually adorns the commissioners door, which, by the way, is provided with an excellent spring lock.

Allogether, the reporters got a little discourged. They felt as if they were not wanted about the district offices. It will be gratifying to thom, no doubt, to find from the commissioners' letter that it was all a misappreheusiou, and that they were as welcome as the day. We do not think the commissioners will have cause to regret giving the press a free run through the district offices. The Washington reporters are generally trustworthy, and can be relied upon not to abuse any privileges given them by publishing matters prematurely, or that they are requested not to publish.

As the Star has made no unjustifiable attacks, "holding up the police force of the district as criminal or incompetent, or stigmatizing the citizens as unusually addicted to the vice of intemperance, and its executive authorities as regardless of the interests in-

to the vice of intemperance, and its executive authorities as regardless of the interests in-trusted to their management," it has nothing to say to the remarks of the commissioners in that connection beyond suggesting that if any paper has sinned in that way the com-plaint should be addressed to the offender. The Sim favored the adoption of the com-missionership form of government originally, and is sincerely anxious for the success of the experiment. It believes that the commissioners are inspired by good motives and a commendable ambition, and though not blindly supporting all their measures, it has been able to commend a very considerable proportion of them.

The Chronicle

The Chronicic. THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN has displayed, in its successful fight against concealed corruption in our humbur and anti-republican system of government in the district, as much sagacity, energy, and courage as are found in the most enterprising metropolitan journals. The police and health board departments must open their records. There is no alternative. Public records must be laid bare for inspection. Concealment is crime itself.

REWARDS OF PATRIOTISM.

Consideration of the Pension Appropriation Bill Completed by the House Committee.

The house committee on appropriations has completed consideration of the pension appropriation bill. The measure appropriates \$20,printion oili. The measure appropriates \$23,-684,400, and provides that any balance of the appropriation for the current fiscal year that may remain unexpended June 30, 1884, shall be reappropriated. This balance is estimated at \$66,000,000. The estimates of the pension bureau for the next fiscal year were \$40,000,000, in addition to the unexpended balanceat the clear of the current fiscal year. the close of the current fiscal year. The ap-propriations in detail are: For invalids, widows, minor children, and dependent relawidows, minor children, and dependent relations, and for the survivors and widows of the war of 1812, \$20,000,000; for fees and expenses of examining surgeons, \$500,000; for pay and allowances of pension agents, for salary, fees for preparing vouchers, rent, fuel, lights, and postage on letters to the executive department, and to pensioners, \$174,400, and for contingent expenses of pension agencies, \$10,000. \$10,000.
The bill provides that the act relating to

claim agents and attorneys in pension cases, approved June 20, 1878, be made applicable to bounty, arrears of pay, lost horse and bounty land cases and pension cases in which arrears of pension are or shall be claimed or granted. The set referred to provides that it shall be unlawful for any attorney, agent, or any other person to demand or receive for his services in a pension case a greater sum than \$10. No fee-contract shall hereafter be filed with the commissioner of pensions in any case. In a pension case in which a fee-contract has heretofore been filed, if the pension be allowed, the commissioner of pensions shall approve the same as to the amount of the fee to be paid, as specified in the contract It also provides that the fee of \$10 prescribed by law shall not be payable to nor demanded or received by any agent or attorney in any or received by any agent or attorney in any pension case until such claim shall be allowed. Upon allowance of arrears of pay, lost horse, arrears of pension, and pension cases, the commissioner of pensions shall direct that the same be paid by the proper pension agent. This act shall apply to pensions as well as all future applications, provided that where the pensioner obtaining a pension or an increase thereof on a taining a pension or an increase thereof on a pending application has heretofore paid to his agent or attorney a sum equal to the whole or any part of the fee allowed by this act the said pensioner shall be entitled to credit for the same against the sum which would otherwise be payable to such agent or attorney. The bill further provides that from and after July 1, 1884, agents for the payment of pensions shall receive only \$5 for each one hundred vouchers, or at that rate for a fraction of one hundred, prepared and paid by any agent in excess of four thousand vouchers per annum, provided that from and after July 1, 1884, there shall be no more than twelve agents for the payment of pen-sions, and it shall be the duty of the Presi-

dent to reduce the pension agents to not ex-

The Shakspeare Club, The meeting of the Shakspeare club held on Saturday evening at the residence of Miss Richards, No. 1527 Rhode Island avenue, was one of nausual interest. Mrs. C. C. Adams read an essay on "The Character of Enobarread an essay on "The Character of Enobar-bus," giving a graceful and fluished analysis of character as presented in the drama and the historical basis from which it was derived. Prof. J. H. Warwick, of Brooklyn, who was present, entertained the club by a fine rendi-tion of "Nothing to Wear." Act 3 of the play of "Antony and Cleopatra" was read in east. The exercises of the club were then cast. The exercises of the club were then closed by the following miscellaneous readings by the members: "Ring Out, Wild Bells," Mr. John Tweedale; "The Foxes' Talls; or, Sandy Macdonald's Signal," Mr. Jefferson: "Abou Ben Adham," Mrs. Adams; "Candor," Mr. Murdoch; "Romance of a Hammock," Mr. D. C. Bangs; "To a Dead Woman," Mr. Whitaker; "Mr. Spoopendyke's flathing Suit," Mr. Mallard, The next meeting of the club will be held at the residence of Cant. C. club will be held at the residence of Capt. C. C. Adams, No. 947 Rhode Island avenue.

Earle's Picture Galleries. Those desiring to see paintings of a high class of art would do well to call at the Scott art galleries. These collections are from the art galleries. These collections are from the galleries of James S. Earlo & Sons, of Philadelphia, and are now on free exhibition. A bandsome catalogue has been printed, containing a list of naintings from Von Seben, Muller, Bruck-Lajos, Po Jonghe, Lassalle, Moran, Calame, De Haggerman, Keller, Ciceri, Chapin, Pinchart, Morris, Antigua, and others equally well known. The sale commences Thursday evening and lasts three days. Earlo's galleries have become famous for their choice gatherings of works of celebrated painters, and adepts in the art have brated painters, and adepts in the art have brated painters, and adepts in the art have frequently expressed their approval of these collections. The Washington public has now an opportunity of inspecting and purchasing good works of art, and a visit to the galiery will be interesting. Mr. R. Scott will conduct the sale, and Walter B. Williams & Co. are the auctioners.

auctioncers. Fire at the Capitol.

At an early hour Saturday morning fire was discovered in the basement floor of the sonate wing by Odicor Frank Jones, of the capitol police. The cause assigned was spon-taneous combustion. An engine was soon at hand and put out the flames. Damago POLITICAL NOTES.

When he was last nominated Mr. Tilden was as straight-out for tariff revision as Mr. Carlisle is. "Was he a hypocrite then, or is it proposed that he shall be a hypecrite now?" — Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier.

It begins to look as if the political desperadoes were determined to give the election for president away this year as the only means and hopes of perpetuating the internal revenue law, in which is embraced the protection of the whisky monopoly .- Nashville American.

Mr. Morrison is the patron of the whisky bill as well as of the tariff bill. In the lat-ter capacity he denounces all attempts on the part of the government to foster private in-terests. In the former capacity he demands government protection for private interests.— Richmond Disputch.

In the old days the democratic party gained and held its power as an anti-protectionist party, and it made the era of cheap living. It will never win control of the federal government on any other fight for this is really the only thing worth fighting for.—Raieigh (N. C.) Chronicle.

Mahoneism has been killed and buried so frequently that reference to it has become a mania with the bourbon editors, or they would permit it to rest. But the truth of the matter is Mahoneism will not remain killed as long as it is a guarantee to the people that its life involves the death and destruction of poor eld Virginia bourbonism.—Richmond Whig. Mahoneism has been killed and buried so

In bravely coming to the assistance of New York in this manner Gov. Cleveland at one and the same stroke places the people of the city under lasting obligations to him and renders his nomination to the presidency by the democrats out of the question. He has inflicted a mortal injury on Tammany, and whom Tammany frowns on no democratic convention dare nominate.—Chicago Herald.

As to the tariff the democrats are having a As to the tariff the democrats are having a terrible collision between their principle and their policy. They are free traders as a class, but free trade means defeat; and it is a question whether they can stultify themselves for success. If they do, they will be defeated as dishonest men, whereas if they do not, they will be defeated as mistaken ones; and it towards the success and it towards the success that the success that the success the success that the success the success that t it remains to be seen whether they shall risk their principle or their policy in the fight,—Baltimore Herald.

Mr. Morrison ingeniously defends the whisky extension bill by saying it is not special legislation in the interest of any body, but to relieve parties from special disabilities imposed by the internal revenue laws upon a particular interest. Mr. Morrison is wrong in this as in many other things. No republican of republicans over advocated legislation in the interest of capital and against interest of the producer more ceragainst interest of the producer more certainly than he does now. We are afraid Mr. Morrison will have to be turned out of the democratic party.—Petersburg Index Appeal.

Recently I have taken pains to get the feeling of men about Arthur, and my belief is that he is well approved of and liked. His quiet, conservative course has turned the suspicion which attended his accession to the presidential chair into cherished confidence. The conservative classes are glad to let well enough alone. It will be a very strong man on the democratic side who can beat Arthur in Ohio, Perhaps you will say of me that it is rather conceited to express these decided opinions, after doubting the honesty or good udgment of the professional politicians. please take them from one who is unparti-san and who in truth is rather indifferent who wins.—Ohio letter in New York Mail and Express.

THE MOUNTAIN LABORED.

Report of the House Committee on Ac counts on the Extra Month's Pay Matter.

On Saturday the house committee on accounts reported favorably the resolution offered last December by Mr. Geddes to pay house employes who came to work prior to Feb. 1, 1884, an extra month's pay.

The committee amended the resolution by providing that its benefits should not extend to employes who were appointed on or after Feb. 4, 1883. (The main effect of the amendment being to prevent Mr. Keifer's nephew, Ben. P. Gaines, from drawing a month's extra

In concluding their report the committee In concluding their report the committee says, in regard to the controversy between ex-Speaker Keifer and Stenographer Tyson:

We have reviewed with great care the testimony submitted, and find that there are several conflicting statements as to minor points involved in the investigation, but from the analysis of the evidence upon the material points at issue, the following conclusions are rescaled:

sions are reached:
That Mr. Gaines performed no service during the vacation of congress. There were no committees of the house in session and no service could be rendered by either of the stenographers to committees. That the agreement as to Tyson's resigna-

tion, alleged by Gen. Kelfer to have existed from the date of Tyson's appointment, was one which Tyson seems not to have under-stood, although it is fairly probable that the speaker had such an impression. It is also fairly probable, taking into consideration the testimony of Mr. Robeson, Mr. Clark, and Mr. Tyson, and the letter written by Gen. Keifer March 3, 1883, that this "agreement" or "understand-ing," if it existed, affected both Dawson and Tyson; that the negotiations between Daw-son and Tyson, by which the former agreed son and Tyson, by which the former agreed to share his salary with the latter during the vacation of congress, were had with the knowledge and approval of Gen. Keifer. It is hir to state, however, that Gen. Keifer did not see the contract between Dawson and Tyson, either before or after is execution, and was in no wise a beneficiary thereof, except in so far as it saved him from the "pain-ful necessity" of ordering the removal of either Tyzon or Dawson. That the resigna-tion of C. W. Tyson was tendered because tion of C. W. Tyson was tendered because domanded by the speaker, and was, in fact, a

resignation under protest. To Resume Work.

With the expectation of the passage of the specific deficiency appropriation bill, the superintendent of the census has notified the clerical force of that bureau who are now farloughed to resume their duties this morn

Dersonat.

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